

The **South Side Healthy Community Organization (SSHCO)** conducted its second virtual community town hall session on February 28, 2022. SSHCO used the town hall as an opportunity to update South Side friends and neighbors on the work we've been doing and our progress on our model to transform health on the South Side of Chicago.

More than 230 people tuned in Monday morning to participate. Thank you to those who attended and to those who participated in the question and answer section of the program! If you'd like to see a complete recording of the town hall, please go to our website – www.southsidehealthycommunity.com – under the "Community Engagement" section.

Below are some highlights from the session:

Our Board Chairman, Rashard Johnson – President of Advocate Trinity and Advocate South Suburban Hospitals – **welcomed everyone and shared some highlights from the November town hall** (which you can find in the community engagement section of our [website](http://www.southsidehealthycommunity.com)). He reminded us that there is great beauty and power in 13 healthcare providers coming together with the community to put our best into making things better on the South Side. We have to be patient and strategic. Steady progress is the key to sustainability.

Four other board members completed our panel of speakers.

Tim Egan, President, and CEO of The New Roseland Community Hospital focused on the **incremental progress related to the four pillars of our health care model**. The four pillars symbolize the top-priority issues community members shared during our community engagement process during 2020 and early 2021. We are currently making progress on our year-one target of hiring ten primary care providers, to be spread among three of our Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) – Friend Health, Beloved Community Wellness, and Chicago Family Health. Ultimately, we will add 90 new primary care providers across our sites of care.

When it comes to specialists, the Board agreed to prioritize behavioral health first because there is a significant demand for mental health services and a limited number of healthcare providers to provide the services. The SSHCO is currently seeking 15 new psychiatrists, psychiatric nurses, and clinical social workers by the end of this year. Similarly, before the end of the year, the SSHCO plans to hire 80 community health workers and nurse care coordinators to provide critical connections in the community. And from the technology side, we have started reaching out to more than 25 potential software vendors to start reviewing solutions for keeping us all connected while ensuring patient privacy.

As we build a healthier community, we must address issues that hold our community back, like lack of access to jobs, transportation, and healthy foods. Brenda Battle, Senior Vice President of Community Health Transformation and Chief Diversity Officer of U Chicago Medicine, talked about our recent **Request for Information (RFI) process seeking input and ideas around social services** provided by local community-based organizations. We were delighted that 42 organizations shared their information with us as we

start to build a robust database of referral sources and potential partnerships. The link is still available on our website if you want to share your information.

Also, our **search for a CEO** for SSHCO is well underway, and we are currently reviewing several excellent candidates. We expect our new CEO to be on board by our next town hall session in May (if not earlier!).

Brenda also shared news about the minority-owned vendors with whom we have already partnered, including the search firm that is helping us find our CEO, our law firm, and the fiscal agent who is advising us on budget, taxes and more. Our bank comes directly from our community – Providence Bank & Trust – which has donated more than six million dollars to community organizations that improve our neighborhoods.

Lastly, Diahann Sinclair – Vice President of Organizational and Community Development for St. Bernard Hospital – updated the group on **staying informed and engaged through our digital channels**. These channels include [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) under South Side Healthy Community Organization. The poll we took during the town hall validated that Facebook and LinkedIn are the most utilized channels – please visit them often for updates and news. Like we did in the town hall, please take a moment right now to like, follow and share both pages.

Also, please tune in to the Community Health Focus Hour dedicated to South Side health transformation on WVON radio, Saturday, March 12, at 1:00 p.m. You can listen directly on the radio at AM-1690 or stream it through the iHeartRadio app or website.

We were happy to see so many community members engaged and asking questions during our town hall session. We answered quite a few of them during the last 25 minutes of the session led by Dr. Airica Steed, Chief Operating Officer of Sinai Chicago. **The answers to those questions, plus those we couldn't get to in our hour together, are on our website.**

Whether you participated in the town hall or not, we always welcome your questions about the work taking place to transform and improve the health of our South Side communities. There are several ways to contact us:

- Email your questions to SouthSideHealthyCommunity@gmail.com
- Leave us a message at (773) 770-5048
- Please fill out the contact form on our website, or
- Post a question to one of our social media pages

Thank you for your continued support of and interest in health transformation on Chicago's South Side. We look forward to seeing you again at our next town hall in late May – we will share the date as we get closer. In the meantime, visit our social media channels and check in regularly on our website. We are enormously excited about our healthy future together.